

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Senate Committee Report

***Excerpts from the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and
Education, and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 2005***

(Report No. 108-345)

TITLE II--DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU

Maternal and Child Health Block Grant

The Committee has again provided \$5,000,000 more for SPRANS activities than would otherwise be the case under the statutory formula for the continuation of oral health programs in the States. Through grants, cooperative agreements or contracts, these funds may be used to increase access to dental care for the most vulnerable low-income children, such as Medicaid, SCHIP, and Head Start eligible children and to implement State identified objectives for improving oral health. Anticipated activities include those targeting the reduction of early childhood caries, and strengthening school-linked dental sealant programs.

Community Based Abstinence Education Program

The Committee has provided funding for the Community Based Abstinence Education and related programs in the Administration for Children and Families and the Office of the Secretary as proposed in the administration request.

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Appropriations, 2004	\$3,312,970,000
Budget estimate, 2005	2,825,802,000
Committee recommendation	2,873,802,000

The Committee recommends \$2,873,802,000 be made available in fiscal year 2005 for payments to States for child support enforcement and family support programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$2,825,802,000 and the budget request includes \$2,873,802,000 for this program. The Committee recommendation provides the full amount requested under current law. The budget request includes net savings of \$48,000,000 based on proposed legislation.

These payments support the States' efforts to promote the self-sufficiency and economic security of low-income families. These funds also support efforts to locate non-custodial parents, determine paternity when necessary, and establish and enforce orders of support. The appropriation, when combined with the \$1,200,000,000 in advance funding provided in last year's bill and an estimated \$194,800,000 from offsetting collections, supports a program level of \$4,268,602,000.

The Committee also has provided \$1,200,000,000 in advance funding for the first quarter of fiscal year 2006 for the child support enforcement program, the same as the budget request.

LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2004	\$1,888,790,000
Budget estimate, 2005	2,000,500,000
Committee recommendation	2,000,500,000

The Committee recommends \$2,000,500,000 for fiscal year 2005 for LIHEAP. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$1,888,790,000 and the budget request includes \$2,000,500,000 for this program. LIHEAP is made up of two components: the State grant program and the contingency fund.

The Committee recommendation includes \$1,901,090,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the State grant program. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$1,789,380,000 and the budget request includes \$1,800,500,000 for this program. Within the funds provided, the Committee recommends \$500,000 for evaluation purposes, as requested by the administration. LIHEAP grants are awarded to States, territories, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations to assist low-income households in meeting the costs of home energy. States receive great flexibility in how they provide assistance, including direct payments to individuals and vendors and direct provision of fuel. These resources are distributed by formula to these entities as defined by statute, based in part on each State's share of home energy expenditures by low-income households.

The Committee recommends \$99,410,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the contingency fund. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$99,410,000 and the budget request includes \$200,000,000 designated as non-emergency funding for this program. The contingency fund may be used to provide assistance to one or more States adversely affected by extreme heat or cold, significant price increases, or other causes of energy-related emergencies. The Committee is committed to ensuring that sufficient resources

are available in the fund, to provide additional assistance to households with energy burdens not met by the regular program, and to meet the objectives of the authorizing statute. The Committee intends to monitor household energy burdens that might require action in future appropriations bills.

The Committee intends that up to \$27,500,000 of the amount recommended for LIHEAP for fiscal year 2005 be used for the leveraging incentive fund. The fund will provide a percentage match to States for private or non-Federal public resources allocated to low-income home energy benefits.

REFUGEE AND ENTRANT ASSISTANCE

Appropriations, 2004	\$447,598,000
Budget estimate, 2005	473,239,000
Committee recommendation	477,239,000

The Committee recommends \$477,239,000 for fiscal year 2005 for refugee and entrant assistance. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$447,598,000 and the budget request includes \$473,239,000 for this program.

The Refugee and Entrant Assistance Program is designed to assist States in their efforts to assimilate refugees, asylees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and adults and minors who are trafficking victims, into American society as quickly and effectively as possible. The program funds State-administered transitional and medical assistance, the voluntary agency matching grant program, programs for victims of trafficking and torture, employment and social services, targeted assistance, and preventive health.

Based on an estimated refugee admission ceiling of 70,000, this appropriation, together with prior-year funds available for fiscal year 2005 expenses, will enable States to continue to provide at least 8 months of cash and medical assistance to eligible refugees and entrants, a variety of social and educational services, as well as foster care for refugee and entrant unaccompanied minors.

In order to carry out the refugee and entrant assistance program, the Committee recommends \$193,577,000 for transitional and medical assistance, including State administration and the voluntary agency program; \$10,000,000 for victims of trafficking; \$155,121,000 for social services; \$4,835,000 for preventive health; and \$49,477,000 for targeted assistance.

The Committee has included \$19,000,000 within the funds provided for social services for increased support to communities with large concentrations of refugees whose cultural differences make assimilation especially difficult justifying a more intense level and longer duration of Federal assistance.

The Committee is aware that the State Department has made arrangements for 15,000 Hmong refugees to enter the United States starting in 2004 and carrying over into 2005.

The Committee is concerned that unlike prior groups of Hmong refugees, which were made up of military and political leaders with the means and education to succeed in America, these immigrants have spent their lives in a refugee camp. Few, if any, speak English. Most are under 18 and have little schooling. Even with the greater level of education and skills possessed by prior refugees, current statistics indicate that about 38 percent of current Hmong-Americans live in poverty. In addition, the Committee has become aware of efforts by the State Department to admit a significant number of Bantu refugees from camps along the Somali-Kenya border. A persecuted minority in Somalia, the Bantus were barred from school and so are largely illiterate. The Committee is concerned that the Bantus only recently began arriving in the United States, thus there is no currently existing Bantu population in the United States to welcome the newcomers. In addition, the Bantus represent the largest cohesive refugee group presented for resettlement screening since the mid-1990s. For these reasons, the Committee has set aside \$8,000,000 within the ORR appropriation for the resettlement of unanticipated arrivals.

The Committee recommends \$54,229,000 for unaccompanied children pursuant to section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002. Funds are provided for the care and placement of unaccompanied alien minors in the Office of Refugee Resettlement. Approximately 5,000 unaccompanied alien children are apprehended each year in the United States by INS/Homeland Security agents, Border Patrol officers, or other law enforcement agencies and taken into care pending resolution of their claims for relief under U.S. immigration law, released to an adult family member, or released to a responsible adult guardian.

The Committee is encouraged by steps taken by the Office of Refugee Resettlement to improve access to legal representation for children served through this program, as called for by Congress in the statement of the managers accompanying the Department of Health and Human Services Appropriations Act, 2004. The Committee encourages the Office to continue efforts in this area, in particular focusing on developing an infrastructure for identifying, assigning, coordinating and tracking competent pro bono counsel in addition to independent guardians ad litem for all such children. Furthermore, the Committee strongly encourages the Office of Refugee Resettlement to give high priority to the location of immigration courts and services when electing ORR contracted facilities. The Committee requests a full discussion of efforts taken in this area to be included in the 2006 congressional justification.

The Committee also recommends \$10,000,000 to treat and assist victims of torture. These funds may also be used to provide training to healthcare providers to enable them to treat the physical and psychological effects of torture. The Committee acknowledges that well-established treatment centers, such as the Center for Victims of Torture, have developed the knowledge base that has fostered growth of treatment facilities around the country and strengthened treatment services generally. This positive trend may continue if leading centers are able to expand their staffs to create more trainers and improve evaluation and research needed to guide and develop new programs. The Committee urges the Office of Refugee Resettlement to place a priority on continued and sufficient grant support for

services provided by existing centers before using funds to expand communities served through this program.

Section 412(a)(7) of title IV of the Immigration and Nationality Act authorizes the use of funds appropriated under this account to be used to carry out monitoring, evaluation, and data collection activities to determine the effectiveness of funded programs and to monitor the performance of States and other grantees.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Appropriations, 2004	\$2,087,310,000
Budget estimate, 2005	2,099,729,000
Committee recommendation	2,099,729,000

The Committee recommends \$2,099,729,000 for fiscal year 2005 for child care and development block grant. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$2,087,310,000 and the budget request includes \$2,099,729,000 for this program.

The child care and development block grant supports grants to States to provide low-income families with financial assistance for child care; for improving the quality and availability of child care; and for establishing or expanding child development programs. The funds are used to both expand the services provided to individuals who need child care in order to work, or attend job training or education, and to allow States to continue funding the activities previously provided under the consolidated programs.

The Committee recommendation continues specific earmarks in appropriations language, also included in the budget request, that provide targeted resources to specific policy priorities including \$19,120,000 for the purposes of supporting before and afterschool services, as well as resource and referral programs. This represents the Federal commitment to the activities previously funded under the dependent care block grant. The Committee expects that these funds will not supplant current funding dedicated to resource and referral and school age activities provided by the child care and development block grant. The Committee strongly encourages States to continue to address the matters of before and afterschool care and the establishment of resource and referral programs with the funds provided in this program.

The Committee recommendation includes an additional \$272,672,000 for child care quality activities, and sets aside \$100,000,000 specifically for an infant care quality initiative. These funds are recommended in addition to the 4 percent quality earmark established in the authorizing legislation. The Committee has provided these additional quality funds because of the considerable research that demonstrates the importance of serving children in high quality child care settings which include nurturing providers who are educated in child development and adequately compensated. While considerable progress has been made, the Committee believes States should continue to invest in education and training linked to compensation of the child care workforce in order to improve the overall quality of child care.

The Committee recommendation also provides \$10,000,000 for child care research, demonstration and evaluation activities.

The Committee recommendation for resource and referral activities also includes \$1,000,000 to continue support for the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies' information service, Child Care Aware, and the national toll-free information hotline which links families to local child care services and programs.

SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

Appropriations, 2004	\$1,700,000,000
Budget estimate, 2005	1,700,000,000
Committee recommendation	1,700,000,000

The Committee recommends \$1,700,000,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the social services block grant. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$1,700,000,000 and the budget request includes \$1,700,000,000 for this program. The Committee has included bill language that allows States to transfer up to 10 percent of their TANF allotment to the social services block grant.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES PROGRAMS

Appropriations, 2004	\$8,833,371,000
Budget estimate, 2005	9,097,897,000
Committee recommendation	9,094,146,000

The Committee recommends \$9,094,146,000 for fiscal year 2005 for children and families services programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$8,833,371,000 and the budget request includes \$9,097,897,000 for this program. In addition, \$10,500,000 in transfers are available under section 241 of the Public Health Service Act.

This appropriation provides funding for programs for children, youth, and families, the developmentally disabled, and Native Americans, as well as Federal administrative costs.

Head Start

The Committee recommends \$6,935,452,000 for fiscal year 2005 for Head Start. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$6,774,980,000 and the budget request includes \$6,935,452,000 for this program. The Committee recommendation includes \$1,400,000,000 in advance funding that will become available on October 1, 2005. The Committee recommendation does not include the \$45,000,000 requested in the budget for the grant program for those States that directly administer the Head Start program.

The Committee is aware that studies on early childhood that provide clear evidence that the brain undergoes its most dramatic development during the first 3 years of life, when children acquire the ability to think, speak, learn, and reason. Disparities in children's cognitive and social abilities become evident well before they enter Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs at age 4. Early Head Start minimizes these disparities so that children are ready to enter school and learn. The National Evaluation of Early Head Start concluded that Early Head Start is making a positive difference in areas associated with children's success in school, family self-sufficiency, and parental support of child development. Currently only 3 percent of estimated eligible infants and toddlers are enrolled in Early Head Start. Over the past 5 years, the Committee has significantly increased funding for Early Head Start, to provide more low-income infants and toddlers with the positive experiences they need for later school and life successes. The Committee intends to continue this important investment.

Given the recent changes in the overall Head Start training and technical assistance system and the special training and technical assistance needs of programs working with infants, toddlers, and their families, the Committee is concerned about the maintenance of the Early Head Start Training and Technical Assistance System. In particular, the Committee is concerned that long distance, technology-based technical assistance is taking the place of providing programs with support from qualified on-site people. The Committee believes that in order to sustain the positive outcomes generated by the program, Early Head Start programs and staff need to continue to receive ongoing training opportunities and technical assistance from organizations with specialized expertise relating to infants, toddlers and families and the demonstrated capacity needed to provide direction and support to the Head Start national training and technical assistance system.

Head Start provides comprehensive development services for low-income children and families, emphasizing cognitive and language development, socioemotional development, physical and mental health, and parent involvement to enable each child to develop and function at his or her highest potential. At least 10 percent of enrollment opportunities in each State are made available to children with disabilities.

The Committee understands the serious need for additional and expanded Head Start facilities among Native American populations and in rural areas. The Committee believes that the Department could help serve these needy communities by providing minor construction funding, as authorized, in remote Native American communities.

Tribal colleges and universities [TCUs) play a central role in strengthening education, economic development, and self-sufficiency to American Indian communities. The Committee recognizes the success of the Head Start-TCU partnership formed in 1999 to foster educational, health, nutritional, and social services for Indian children, and recommends that this program be continued and expanded. The Committee supports the Department's commitment to continue to award 5-year grants to tribal colleges and universities.

While current law requires that 50 percent of Head Start teachers in center-based Head Start programs have not less than an associate degree in early childhood education or a related field, American Indian Head Start programs are generally located in areas that are isolated from mainstream colleges where such degrees can be earned. This program provides accessible, high-quality, and accredited education opportunities to American Indian Head Start agency staff, enabling them to better deliver services that enhances the social and cognitive development of low income American Indian children.

The Committee strongly supports the effort to strengthen the qualifications of Head Start teachers. The Committee encourages Head Start to continue to work toward the goal of having all of their teachers in center-based Head Start programs have an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in early childhood education, or a degree in a related field with experience in teaching preschool children. The Committee expects the Department to focus staff development efforts on increasing the educational level of Head Start teachers in order to meet this goal.

The Committee is aware that the Department's 'Descriptive Study of Seasonal Farmworker Families' published in September 2001 revealed that just 19 percent of eligible children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers are served by Migrant Head Start programs. The study also concluded 'that Migrant Head Start agencies greatly improve the lives of migrant and seasonal farmworker families, and in doing so, help to strengthen local agricultural economies.' The Committee urges the Head Start Bureau to examine this issue and develop a plan to ensure that sufficient funds are provided for Migrant Head Start programs.

The Head Start Bureau shall provide the Committee with the number and cost of buses purchased, by region, in fiscal years 2002, 2003, and the first half of 2004 with Head Start funds no later than March 31, 2005.

The Committee is conscious of efforts currently being undertaken to improve pre-literacy skills in Head Start children and lauds the administration for its commitment to this effort. However, the Committee continues to caution against anything that would detract from the comprehensive nature of the program in delivering early childhood development and family services. While school readiness is front and center in the goals of Head Start, the elements necessary to achieve that readiness range from adequate nutrition and health screening, to social and emotional development and family building, as well as the cognitive growth of young children.

The Committee encourages ACF's Head Start Bureau and HRSA's Maternal and Child Health Bureau to continue and expand their successful interagency agreement to jointly address dental disease, a significant unmet health need of Head Start children. This partnership has brought together Head Start and the dental community at the national, State and local levels to seek solutions to improve access to oral health care for these children through the public and private sectors.

The Committee recognizes that assessing the effectiveness of Head Start nationwide is an important goal and that by sponsoring the development of the National Reporting System [NRS] the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services hopes to aggregate and report data nationally. The Committee commends the efforts of the Administration for Children and Families [ACF] to measure the effectiveness of Head Start and to assess progress among Head Start children. In order to ensure that the National Reporting System is effectively meeting its objective, the Committee urges ACF to utilize an independent organization to review the test's validity and its impact on instruction.

The Committee acknowledges Head Start's effort to test both English and Spanish language speakers. Currently, the determining factor for which language version will be administered is the child's repeated failure to comprehend questions posed in English. The Committee urges ACF to review this policy in order to minimize any potential unintended consequences for children and the teacher-child relationship.

The Committee intends that no Head Start agency, Head Start center, or Early Head Start center receiving financial assistance available through this Act shall provide compensation for any of its employees (including program directors) in excess of the salary of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and that each Head Start agency, Head Start center, or Early Head Start center receiving financial assistance available through this Act shall maintain and annually submit to the Secretary, a complete accounting of its administrative expenses, including expenses for salaries and compensation funded under this subchapter disaggregated by employee.

It has come to the Committee's attention that one Head Start grantee did not adequately obtain parental consent before performing a health screening on Head Start students which included intrusive physical examinations. The Committee believes that Head Start agencies receiving financial assistance available through this Act should obtain written parental consent before administration of, or referral for, any health care service provided or arranged to be provided, including any non-emergency intrusive physical examination of a child in connection with participation in a Head Start program. This should not in any way be interpreted to prohibit agencies from using established methods for handling cases of suspected or known child abuse and neglect that are in compliance with applicable Federal, State, or tribal law.

The Committee is interested meeting the goal of this important program through the efficient and effective expenditure of Head Start program funds. With respect to training activities of Head Start agencies and providers, the Committee is concerned that funds provided under this section shall not be used for long-distance travel expenses for training activities that are substantially similar to training activities that are locally or regionally available. The Committee would like to note that this is not intended to automatically prevent attendance in National Conferences within the 50 United States.

Consolidated Runaway and Homeless Youth Program

The Committee recommends \$95,000,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the consolidated runaway and homeless youth program. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$89,431,000 and the budget request includes \$89,447,000 for this program. The Committee recommends \$49,181,000 for basic centers and \$46,819,000 for transitional living programs.

This program addresses the crisis needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families through support to local and State governments and private agencies. Basic centers and transitional living programs help address the needs of some of the estimated 500,000 to 1.5 million and homeless youth, many of whom are running away from unsafe or unhealthy living environments. These programs have been proven effective at supporting positive youth development, securing stable and safe living arrangements and providing the skills required to engage in positive relationships with caring adults and contribute to society.

Under current law the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requires that not less than 90 percent of the funds be allocated to States for the purpose of establishing and operating community-based runaway and homeless youth centers, as authorized under Parts A and B of the Act. Funds are distributed on the basis of the State youth population under 18 years of age in proportion to the national total. The remaining 10 percent funds networking and research and demonstration activities including the National Toll-Free Communications Center.

Grants are used to develop or strengthen community-based programs which assist homeless youth in making a smooth transition to productive adulthood and social self-sufficiency; and to provide technical assistance to transitional living programs for the acquisition and maintenance of resources and services.

The basic centers program, authorized under Part A of the Act, supports grants to community-based public and private agencies for the provision of outreach, crisis intervention, temporary shelter, counseling, family unification and aftercare services to runaway and homeless youth and their families.

The transitional living program [TLP] provides grants to local public and private organizations to address shelter and service needs of homeless youth, ages 16-21. The program's goals are to have youth safe at home or in appropriate alternative settings and to help them develop into independent, contributing members of society.

A homeless youth accepted into the program is eligible to receive shelter and services continuously for up to 540 days. The services include counseling; life skills training, such as money management and housekeeping; interpersonal skill building, such as decision-making and priority setting; educational advancement; job preparation attainment; and mental and physical health care.

Under the new authorization, the maximum age limit for youth seeking shelter is reduced from 21 to 18, however there is an exception that allows youth in the program who have

not reached age 18 to remain in the program after 540 days. Centers are now able to exceed the 20 youth capacity limit if the State requires a higher limit in order to be licensed under the Basic Center program. Finally, the allotment for Transitional Living Programs is increased to 45 percent and, under warranted conditions, to 55 percent.

The Committee recommendation does not include the \$10,000,000 requested in the budget for a separate maternity group homes program. The Committee is aware of the need for and shares the administration's interest in funding residential services for young mothers and their children who are unable to live with their own families because of abuse, neglect, or other circumstances. The Committee notes that pregnant and parenting youth are currently eligible for and served through the TLP.

The Committee also recognizes the need for and value of expanding transitional living opportunities for all homeless youth. Therefore, the Committee seeks to preserve the flexibility afforded in current law to respond to the needs of the young people who are most at-risk and in greatest need of transitional living opportunities in their communities by providing additional resources to the existing portfolio of consolidated Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs.

It is the Committee's expectation that current and future TLP grantees will continue to provide transitional living opportunities and support to pregnant and parenting homeless youth, as is their current practice. To further ensure that pregnant and parenting homeless youth are able to access transitional living opportunities and support in their communities, the Committee encourages the Secretary, acting through the network of federally-funded runaway and homeless youth training and technical assistance providers, to offer guidance to grantees and others on the programmatic modifications required to address the unique needs of pregnant and parenting youth and on the various sources of funding available for residential services to this population.

Maternity Group Homes

The Committee recommendation does not include the \$10,000,000 requested in the budget for the maternity group homes program. Under this proposed program, the ACF would provide targeted funding for community-based, adult-supervised group homes for young mothers and their children. These homes would provide safe, stable, nurturing environments for mothers who cannot live safely with their own families and assist them in moving forward with their lives by providing support so they can finish school, acquire job skills, and learn to be good parents.

The Committee expects the Family and Youth Services Bureau to continue to provide the technical assistance needed to enable TLP grantees and their community partners to address the unique needs of young mothers and their children, as well as helping interested entities in identifying sources of funding currently available to provide residential services to this population.

Runaway Youth Prevention Program

The Committee recommends \$15,802,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the runaway youth prevention program. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$15,302,000 and the budget request includes \$15,302,000 for this program. This is a discretionary grant program open to private nonprofit agencies for the provision of services to runaway, homeless, and street youth. Funds may be used for street-based outreach and education, including treatment, counseling, provision of information, and referrals for these youths, many of whom have been subjected to, or are at risk of being subjected to, sexual abuse. The goal of this program is to help young people leave the streets.

Child Abuse Prevention Programs

The Committee recommends \$61,886,000 for fiscal year 2005 for child abuse prevention programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$56,269,000 and the budget request includes \$68,279,000 for this program. The recommendation includes \$27,500,000 for State grants and \$34,386,000 for discretionary activities.

These programs seek to improve and increase activities at all levels of government which identify, prevent, and treat child abuse and neglect through State grants, technical assistance, research, demonstration, and service improvement.

Abandoned Infants Assistance

The Committee recommends \$12,052,000 for fiscal year 2005 for abandoned infants assistance. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$12,052,000 and the budget request includes \$12,086,000 for this program.

This program provides financial support to public and private entities to develop, implement, and operate demonstration projects that will prevent the abandonment of infants and young children. Grants provide additional services such as identifying and addressing the needs of abandoned infants, especially those who are drug exposed or HIV positive; providing respite care for families and care givers; and assisting abandoned infants and children to reside with their natural families or in foster care.

Child Welfare Services

The Committee recommends \$291,986,000 for fiscal year 2005 for child welfare services. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$289,320,000 and the budget request includes \$291,986,000 for this program.

This program helps State public welfare agencies improve their child welfare services with the goal of keeping families together. State services include: preventive intervention, so that, if possible, children will not have to be removed from their homes; reunification so that children can return home; and development of alternative placements like foster care or adoption if children cannot remain at home. These services are provided without regard to income.

Child Welfare Training

The Committee recommends \$7,470,000 for fiscal year 2005 for child welfare training. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$7,411,000 and the budget request includes \$7,470,000 for this program.

Under section 426, title IV-B of the Social Security Act, discretionary grants are awarded to public and private nonprofit institutions of higher learning to develop and improve education/training programs and resources for child welfare service providers. These grants upgrade the skills and qualifications of child welfare workers.

Adoption Opportunities

The Committee recommends \$27,343,000 for fiscal year 2005 for adoption opportunities. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$27,103,000 and the budget request includes \$27,343,000 for this program.

This program eliminates barriers to adoption and helps find permanent homes for children who would benefit by adoption, particularly children with special needs.

Adoption Incentives

The Committee recommends \$32,103,000 for fiscal year 2005 for adoption incentives. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$7,456,000 and the budget request includes \$32,103,000 for this program.

The purpose of this program is to provide incentive funds to States to encourage an increase in the number of adoptions of children from the public foster care system. These funds are used to pay States bonuses for increasing their number of adoptions. The appropriation allows incentive payments to be made for adoptions completed prior to September 30, 2005.

Adoption Awareness

The Committee recommends \$12,906,000 for fiscal year 2005 for adoption awareness. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$12,785,000 and the budget request includes \$12,906,000 for this program.

This program was authorized in the Children's Health Act of 2000. The program consists of two activities: the Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program and the Special Needs Awareness Campaign. The Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program provides grants to support adoption organizations in the training of designated health staff, in eligible health centers that provide health services to pregnant women, to inform them about adoption and make referrals on request on an equal basis with all other courses of action. Within the Committee recommendation, \$9,906,000 is available for this purpose.

The Special Needs Adoption Campaign supports grants to carry out a national campaign to inform the public about the adoption of children with special needs. The Committee recommendation includes \$3,000,000 to continue this important activity.

Compassion Capital Fund

The Committee recommends \$47,702,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the compassion capital fund. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$47,702,000 and the budget request includes \$100,000,000 for this program.

The Committee expects funds made available through this program to supplement and not supplant private resources and encourages the Secretary to require private resources to match grant funding provided to public/private partnerships.

Funds available will support grants to charitable organizations to emulate model social service programs and to encourage research on the best practices of social service organizations.

Social Services Research

The Committee recommends \$19,168,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the social services research. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$19,168,000 and the budget request includes \$5,982,000 for this program.

The Committee has funded \$6,000,000 of this program through transfers available under section 241 of the Public Health Service Act. These funds support cutting-edge research and evaluation projects in areas of critical national interest. Research includes determining services that are more cost-effective and alternative ways to increase the economic independence of American families.

The Committee notes ACF's efforts to assist States with meeting the extensive record-keeping, reporting, and tracking requirements of the TANF program. Working through the state information technology consortium, ACF is providing States with the tools necessary to strengthen and improve the complex IT systems required to support TANF. Similarly, on behalf of Child Support Enforcement, the consortium is helping to expand data exchange capabilities between the courts and State child support enforcement agencies as well as increase collection efficiency in States and tribal organizations. The Committee recommends that both collaborative efforts with the state information technology consortium be continued at their current levels.

Community-Based Resource Centers

The Committee recommends \$43,205,000 for fiscal year 2005 for community-based resource centers. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$33,205,000 and the budget request includes \$65,002,000 for this program.

These resources support two purposes: assisting each State in developing, operating, expanding, and enhancing a network of community-based, prevention-focused, family resource and support programs and supporting activities that foster an understanding, appreciation, and knowledge of diverse populations in order to be effective in preventing and treating child abuse and neglect.

Abstinence Education

The Committee recommends \$154,500,000 for fiscal year 2005 for community based abstinence education. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$124,549,000 and the budget request includes \$236,426,000 for this program. Within the funds provided, \$100,000,000 is provided for community-based abstinence education, \$4,500,000 is provided through an evaluation set-aside as requested by the administration, and \$50,000,000 is provided as pre-appropriated mandatory funds.

This program provides support for the development and implementation of abstinence education programs for adolescents, ages 12 through 18. These programs are unique in that their entire focus is to educate young people and create an environment within communities that supports teen decisions to postpone sexual activity until marriage.

Developmental Disabilities

The Committee recommends \$171,438,000 for fiscal year 2005 for programs administered by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$164,772,000 and the budget request includes \$164,854,000 for these programs. Within the funds provided, \$156,526,000 is for carrying out the Developmental Disability Act, and \$14,912,000 is for carrying out the Help America Vote Act of 2002.

The Administration on Developmental Disabilities supports community-based delivery of services which promote the rights of persons of all ages with developmental disabilities. Developmental disability is defined as severe, chronic disability attributed to mental or physical impairments manifested before age 22, which causes substantial limitations in major life activities. The ADD also administers monies for election assistance for individuals with disabilities. This program is for individuals with any type of disability.

Of the funds provided, the Committee recommends \$73,081,000 for State councils. These councils assist each State in promoting the development of a comprehensive, statewide, consumer and family-centered system which provides a coordinated array of culturally-competent services, and other assistance for individuals with development disabilities. State councils undertake a range of activities including demonstration of new approaches, program and policy analysis, interagency collaboration and coordination, outreach and training.

The Committee recommends \$40,000,000 for protection and advocacy grants. This formula grant program provides funds to States to establish protection and advocacy

systems to protect the legal and human rights of persons with developmental disabilities who are receiving treatment, services, or rehabilitation within the State.

The Committee recommends \$11,642,000 for projects of national significance to assist persons with developmental disabilities. This program funds grants and contracts providing nationwide impact by developing new technologies and applying and demonstrating innovative methods to support the independence, productivity, and integration into the community of persons with developmental disabilities. The Committee recognizes the potential benefits that assistive technology can have for individuals with developmental disabilities. Of these funds, \$4,000,000 is available to expand activities of the Family Support Program. The Committee's placement of funds for family support within the Projects of National Significance account does not provide ACF with discretion on this definition of family support as defined in Title II of the Developmental Disability Act. The Committee makes a crucial distinction between support services designed for families of children with disabilities and support services designed for an individual with a disability. The Committee intends that these funds be used for the support and assistance of families of children with disabilities, in accordance with the statute.

The Committee recommends \$31,803,000 for university-affiliated programs. This program consists of a network of centers that are interdisciplinary education, research and public service units of a university system, or are public or non-profit entities associated with universities. These centers conduct research, develop evidence based practices and teach thousands of parents, professionals, students, and people with disabilities about critical disability areas such as early intervention, health care, community-based services, inclusive and meaningful education, transition from school to work, employment, housing, assistive technology, aging with a disability and transportation. The centers serve as the major vehicle to translate disability related research into community practice and service systems and to train the next cohort of future professionals who will provide services and supports to an increasingly diverse population of people with disabilities. The increase provided in the bill will allow funding for existing centers to reach the authorized level, support new center grants in five States that currently have unserved or underserved populations, and establish four new centers that specialize in minority health disparities and education issues.

The Committee recommends \$14,912,000 for disabled voter services. Of these funds, \$10,000,000 is to promote disabled voter access, and the remaining \$4,912,000 is for disabled voters protection and advocacy systems. The election assistance for individuals with disabilities program was authorized in the Help America Vote Act of 2002. The program enables an applicant to establish, expand, and improve access to, and participation by, any individual with a disability in the election process.

Native American Programs

The Committee recommends \$45,157,000 for fiscal year 2005 for Native American programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$45,157,000 and the budget request includes \$45,155,000 for this program.

The Administration for Native Americans [ANA] assists Indian tribes and Native American organizations in planning and implementing long-term strategies for social and economic development through the funding of direct grants for individual projects, training and technical assistance, and research and demonstration programs.

The Committee continues its significant interest in the revitalization of native languages through education. The Committee encourages ANA to allocate additional resources to support the Native American Languages program and urges the ANA to make schools a part of this effort, consistent with the policy expressed in the Native American Languages Act.

Community Services

The Committee recommends \$727,650,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the community services programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$731,284,000 and the budget request includes \$552,350,000 for this program.

Within the funds provided, the Committee recommends \$650,000,000 for the community services block grant [CSBG]. These funds are used to make formula grants to States and Indian tribes to provide a wide range of services and activities to alleviate causes of poverty in communities and to assist low-income individuals in becoming self-sufficient.

The Committee rejects the administration's recommendation to cut the community services block grant funding. Although a restrictive Committee allocation prevented CSBG funding from being substantially increased this year, the Committee continues to recognize the importance of CSBG and the Community Action Agencies it funds in helping meet the extraordinary challenges facing low-income communities.

The Nation's Community Action Agency network relies on CSBG funding to help initiate and administer programs designed to alleviate poverty. The universal characteristic of these CSBG-funded programs is that they provide people with the resources and the tools to become self-sufficient. The Committee understands that the Department of Health and Human Services, and its Office of Community Services in particular, could better use this network in developing future policy initiatives. The Committee notes that in a number of States, including Iowa and Pennsylvania, CAA-initiated family development and self-sufficiency programs are an integral component of welfare reform efforts. The administration is encouraged to look for further nationwide linkages between those individuals seeking to leave the welfare system and become self-sufficient and the many family development and self-sufficiency strategies operated by Community Action Agencies.

The Committee expects the Office of Community Services to release funding to States in the most timely manner. The Committee also expects States to make funds available promptly. The Committee is aware that the Office of Community Services and some States have been extraordinarily delinquent in providing funds to local eligible entities.

In addition, the Committee again expects the Office of Community Services to inform the State CSBG grantees of any policy changes affecting carryover CSBG funds within a reasonable time after the beginning of the Federal fiscal year.

Several discretionary programs are funded from this account. Funding for these programs is recommended at the following levels for fiscal year 2005: community economic development, \$38,000,000, of which \$2,000,000 is for neighborhood innovation projects; individual development accounts, \$24,912,000; rural community facilities, \$7,500,000; and community food and nutrition, \$7,238,000. The Committee did not provide funds for the national youth sports program.

The Committee continues to support strongly the Community Economic Development program because of the substantial record of achievement that Community Development Corporations have compiled in working in distressed urban and rural communities. The Committee, in particular, notes that Federal funds leverage substantial non-Federal resources in meeting the objectives of this program. Therefore, it is the Committee's intent that appropriated funds should be allocated to the maximum extent possible in the form of grants to qualified Community Development Corporations in order to maximize the leveraging power of the Federal investment and the number and amount of set-asides should be reduced to the most minimal levels.

Community economic development grants are made to private, nonprofit community development corporations, which in turn provide technical and financial assistance to business and economic development projects that target job and business opportunities for low income citizens. The Committee has included bill language clarifying that Federal funds made available through this program may be used for financing for construction and rehabilitation and loans or investments in private business enterprises owned by Community Development Corporations.

The Committee recognizes that manufacturing is an important part of the economic base in urban communities and rural areas. The Committee notes that recent research indicates that very little venture or equity capital makes it into this sector and this is particularly the case for manufacturing businesses located in economically distressed communities. The Committee is aware that a number of community development corporations [CDCs] have provided financing to manufacturing businesses in low income areas.

A principal source of capital for CDCs is Community Economic Development Grants. The Committee recommendation includes an additional \$3,500,000 above the budget request for the purpose of providing technical and financial assistance to manufacturing enterprises. The Committee intends that these funds be made available to experienced CDCs with a record of lending or investing in manufacturing. Further, the Committee

intends these funds to be used for providing technical assistance and financial assistance--including loans and investments for plants, equipment and working capital--to manufacturing businesses. Of the total provided, the Committee has included \$5,481,000 for the Job Creation Demonstration authorized under the Family Support Act to target community development activities to create jobs for people on public assistance. This demonstration program provides grants on a competitive basis to non-profit organizations to create new employment and business opportunities for TANF recipients and other low-income individuals. Funding also supports technical and financial assistance for private employers that will result in the creation of full-time permanent jobs for eligible individuals. The Committee recognizes that continued funding of the Job Creation Demonstration program would provide opportunities for more low-income individuals. As in the past, the Committee expects that a priority for grants under this program go to experienced community development corporations.

Within the funds provided, the Committee has also included \$2,000,000 for neighborhood innovation projects (42 USC 9921(a)(4)) to enable the Office of Community Services to participate with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, foundations, and financial institutions.

Most of the drinking water and wastewater systems in the country that are not in compliance with Federal standards are in communities of 3,000 or fewer. Rural Community Assistance Programs [RCAPs] use funds available from the Rural Community Facilities Program to assist a number of communities in gaining access to adequate community facilities, gaining financing for new or improved water and wastewater systems and in complying with Federal standards.

The Committee has included bill language allocating funding to the Office of Community Services for Rural Community Facilities Technical Assistance as authorized under section 680(3)(B) of the Community Services Block Grant Act. In providing this funding, the Committee expects that it be used solely for the purpose of improving water and wastewater facilities in poor, rural communities. As in the past, these funds should be allocated to regional, rural community assistance programs.

The Committee is concerned that many small and very small community water and wastewater treatment systems might be most vulnerable to terrorist attack, and yet least prepared to deal with the issue. The Committee urges OCS to continue to support RCAP Small Community Infrastructure Safety and Security Training and Technical Assistance project, which provides State, regional and national infrastructure safety and security training workshops and on-site technical assistance targeted to small and very small community water and wastewater treatment systems. The goal of the project is to improve the capacity of small systems to better prepare for emergencies, develop emergency preparedness training manuals for small water systems, identify appropriate technologies to secure such systems, and provide technical assistance to small communities struggling to deal with these issues.

Domestic Violence Hotline

The Committee recommends \$3,500,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the national domestic violence hotline. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$2,982,000 and the budget request includes \$3,000,000 for this program.

This is a cooperative agreement which funds the operation of a national, toll-free, 24-hours-a-day telephone hotline to provide information and assistance to victims of domestic violence.

Battered Women's Shelters

The Committee recommends \$128,000,000 for fiscal year 2005 for battered women's shelters program. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$125,648,000 and the budget request includes \$125,648,000 for this program.

This is a formula grant program to support community-based projects which operate shelters and provide related assistance for victims of domestic violence and their dependents. Emphasis is given to projects which provide counseling, advocacy, and self-help services to victims and their children.

Early Learning Opportunities Program

The Committee recommends \$36,000,000 for fiscal year 2005 for early learning opportunities program. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$33,580,000 and the budget request did not include funds for this program.

This program supports grants to local community councils comprised of representatives from agencies involved in early learning programs, parent organizations and key community leaders. Funds are used to increase the capacity of local organizations to facilitate development of cognitive skills, language comprehension and learning readiness; enhance childhood literacy; improve the quality of early learning programs through professional development and training; and remove barriers to early learning programs.

Faith-Based Center

The Committee recommends \$1,386,000 for fiscal year 2005 for the operation of the Department's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$1,386,000 and the budget request includes \$1,400,000 for this program.

Mentoring Children of Prisoners

The Committee recommends \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2005 for mentoring children of prisoners. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$49,701,000 and the budget request includes \$50,000,000 for this program.

The mentoring children of prisoners program was authorized in 2001 under section 439 of the Social Security Act. The purpose of this program is to help children while their parents are imprisoned and includes activities that keep children connected to a parent in prison in order to increase the chances that the family will come together successfully when the parent is released. As a group, children of prisoners are less likely than their peers to succeed in school and more likely to become engaged in delinquent behavior.

Independent Living Training Vouchers

The Committee recommends \$44,734,000 for fiscal year 2005 for independent living training vouchers. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$44,734,000 and the budget request includes \$60,000,000 for this program.

These funds will support vouchers of up to \$5,000 for college tuition, or vocational training for individuals who age out of the foster care system so they can be better prepared to live independently and contribute productively to society. Studies have shown that 25,000 youth leave foster care each year at age 18 and just 50 percent will have graduated high school, 52 percent will be unemployed and 25 percent will be homeless for one or more nights.

Promotion of Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage

The Committee does not provide funds for fiscal year 2005 for promotion of responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage. The budget request includes \$50,000,000 for this new program designed to promote responsible fatherhood and responsible marriage. The purpose of this proposed program, for which authorizing legislation is pending, is to spur approaches at State and community levels to assist fathers to be more actively and productively involved in the lives of their children.

Program Administration

The Committee recommends \$190,206,000 for fiscal year 2005 for program administration. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$177,894,000 and the budget request includes \$190,206,000 for this program.

The Committee urges ACF to continue to make progress in improving its Annual Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report. The Committee notes that many programs proposed for funding do not have solid data for baselines or performance outcome measures. This lack of objective data makes more difficult the Committee's decisions regarding the allocation of limited resources. The Committee believes that the Agency should work with program grantees and relevant associations to identify the most objective ways in which to evaluate the effectiveness of ACF programs and establish a timeline for producing meaningful data by which programs can be assessed. The Committee urges that steps be taken to improve this situation and expects information regarding such actions to be included in the fiscal year 2006 congressional justification.

The Committee continues its interest in the Department's Child and Family Services reviews. These reviews are an effective method for monitoring the progress States are making in assuring the safety, health, and permanency for children in child welfare and foster care as required in the Adoption and Safe Families Act. The Committee encourages the Department to make available sufficient resources to ensure full implementation of the new collaborative monitoring system.

PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES

Appropriations, 2004	\$404,383,000
Budget estimate, 2005	505,000,000
Committee recommendation	404,383,000

The Committee recommends \$404,383,000 for fiscal year 2005 for promoting safe and stable families. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$404,383,000 and the budget request includes \$505,000,000 for this program.

Funding available provides grants to States in support of: (1) family preservation services; (2) time-limited family reunification services; (3) community-based family support services; and, (4) adoption promotion and support services. The Committee notes that most of the Federal funding related to child welfare is provided for the removal and placement of children outside of their own homes. Funds available through the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program are focused on supporting those activities that can prevent family crises from emerging which might require the temporary or permanent removal of a child from his or her own home.

The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program is comprised of \$305,000,000 in capped entitlement funds authorized by the Social Security Act and \$99,383,000 in discretionary appropriations.

PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE

Appropriations, 2004	\$5,068,300,000
Budget estimate, 2005	5,037,900,000
Committee recommendation	5,037,900,000

The Committee recommends \$5,037,900,000 for fiscal year 2005 for payments to States for foster care and adoption assistance. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2004 is \$5,068,300,000 and the budget request includes \$5,037,900,000 for this program. In addition, the Committee recommendation concurs with the administration's request of \$1,767,200,000 for an advance appropriation for the first quarter of fiscal year 2006.

The Foster Care Program provides Federal reimbursement to States for: maintenance payments to families and institutions caring for eligible foster children, matched at the

Federal medical assistance percentage [FMAP] rate for each State; and administration and training costs to pay for the efficient administration of the Foster Care Program, and for training of foster care workers and parents.

The Adoption Assistance Program provides funds to States for maintenance costs and the nonrecurring costs of adoption for children with special needs. The goal of this program is to facilitate the placement of hard-to-place children in permanent adoptive homes, and thus prevent long, inappropriate stays in foster care. As in the Foster Care Program, State administrative and training costs are reimbursed under this program.

The Independent Living Program provides services to foster children under 18 and foster youth ages 18-21 to help them make the transition to independent living by engaging in a variety of services including educational assistance, life skills training, health services and room and board. States are awarded grants from the annual appropriation proportionate to their share of the number of children in foster care, subject to a matching requirement.

TITLE V--GENERAL PROVISIONS

COMPLIANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 7, RULE XVI, OF THE STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

Paragraph 7 of rule XVI requires that Committee report on general appropriations bills identify each Committee amendment to the House bill `which proposes an item of appropriation which is not made to carry out the provisions of an existing law, a treaty stipulation, or an act or resolution previously passed by the Senate during that session.'

The following items are identified pursuant to this requirement: ... Child Care and Development Block Grant, \$2,099,729,000; Head Start, \$6,935,452,000; Native American Programs, \$45,157,000; Refugee and Entrant Assistance Programs, \$477,239,000; Community Services \$727,650,000; ...
